

## POST OAK

### *Quercus stellata* Wangenh.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Iron oak, Box white oak, White oak.

FORM: One of the most variable of North American oaks. Usually 50-60 feet high, trunk diameter 1-2 feet, may reach a height of 80-100 feet, with a long clean bole, in its northern limits reduced to a shrub, crown broad, dense, round-topped with stout spreading branches; crown much reduced in the forest.

BARK: 1/2-1 inch thick, red, more or less deeply tinged with brown, divided by deep fissures into broad ridges covered on the surface with narrow closely appressed scales.

TWIGS: At the end of the first season covered with a short pubescence, ultimately gray, dary brown, nearly black or bright brown tinged with orange.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, oblong-obovate, deeply 5-lobed with broad sinuses oblique in the bottom, and short wide lobes, broad and truncate or obtusely pointed at apex; cuneate, or occasionally abruptly narrowed and cuneate or rounded at base, usually 4-5 inches long, and 3-4 inches wide across the lateral lobes, but occasionally larger; often in the form of a crude thick cross.

FLOWERS: Monoecious; staminate, bracteolate in interrupted aments 2 1/2-4 inches long, calyx yellow, anthers covered with short pale hairs; pistillate, sessile or stalked, stigmas bright red.

FRUIT: Matures the first season; nut oval to ovoid, or ovoid-oblong, broad at base, obtuse, naked or pubescent at apex, 1/2-1 inch long, 1/4-3/4 inch thick, sometimes striate with dark longitudinal stripes, enclosed 1/3-1/2 of its length in the cup-shaped, turbinate or rarely saucer-shaped cup.

WINTER BUDS: Broadly ovoid, obtuse or rarely acute, 1/8-1/4 inch long, with bright chestnut-brown scales.

WOOD: Very heavy, hard, close-grained, durable in contact with the soil, light or dark brown with lighter colored sapwood

USES: Pulp, firewood, lumber, railroad ties. Historical uses: barrel staves, agricultural implements.

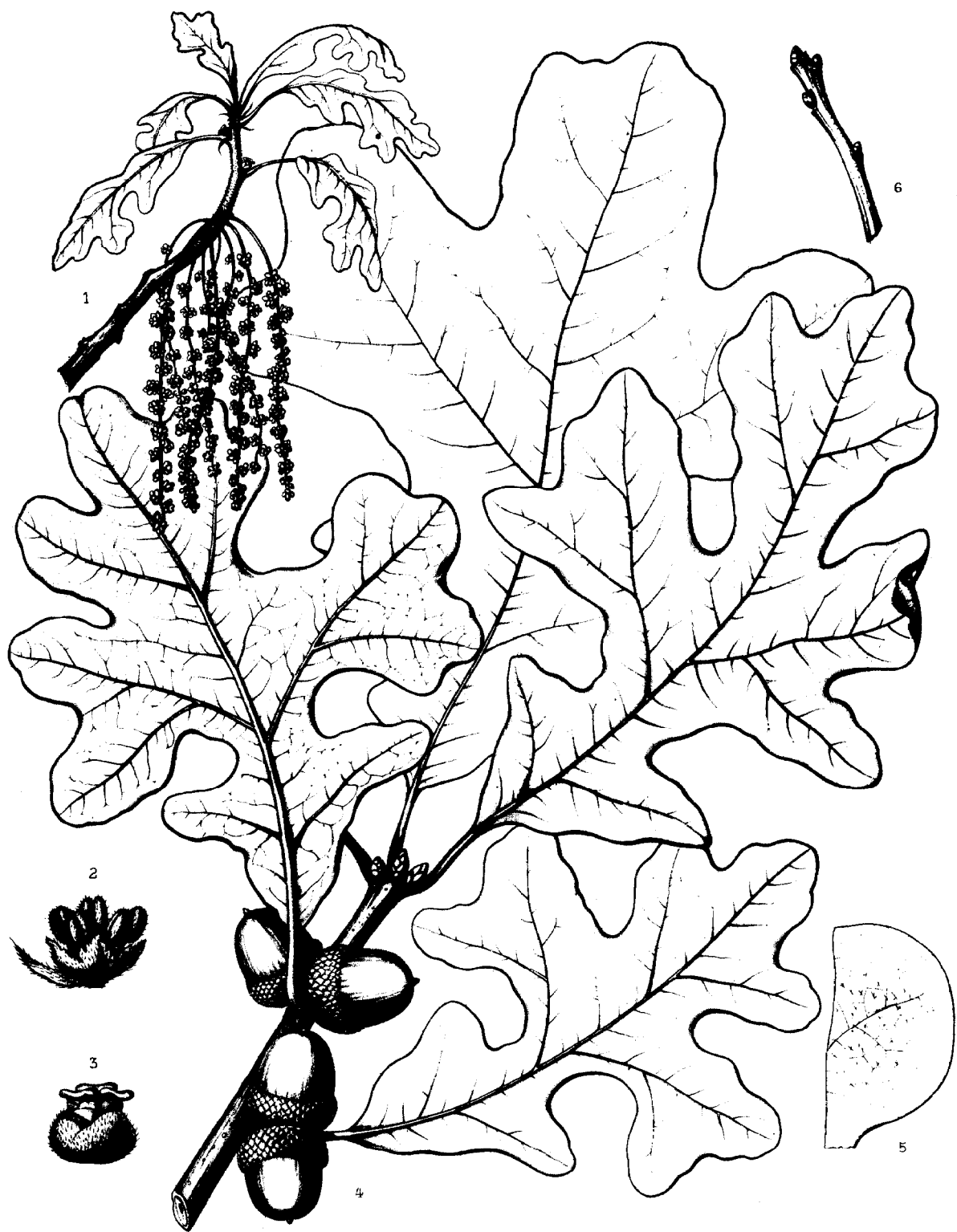
HABITAT: Dry gravelly or sandy uplands.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Peculiar cross-shaped form of the leaves; stout rusty pubescent twigs; small and bright chestnut-brown color of winter buds.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Widely distributed over the state.

#### EXPLANATION OF PLATE

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. A fruiting branch showing nearly entire and deeply lobed leaves | 4. A leaf                     |
| 2. A leaf  | 5. A fruit with a deep cup    |
| 3. A leaf  | 6. A fruit with a shallow cup |



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